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ABSTRACT

This pamphlet was designed to provide vocational educators, administrators, and other individuals interested in developing and/or implementing cooperative vocational programs with information on the subject. Answered are these questions: (1) What evidence is there that cooperative vocational education is necessary or that it is better than other methods of instruction, (2) How does cooperative vocational education differ from other work-experience programs, (3) What are the characteristics of a good cooperative vocational education program, (4) What is related instruction in a cooperative vocational education program, (5) Where can instructional materials for cooperative vocational education be obtained, (6) What qualifications must a successful teacher-coordinator possess, (7) What are the characteristics of a suitable job training station, and (8) What are some problems that can be anticipated in developing and operating a cooperative vocational education program. Publications containing more extensive information on the subject are cited. (SN)

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COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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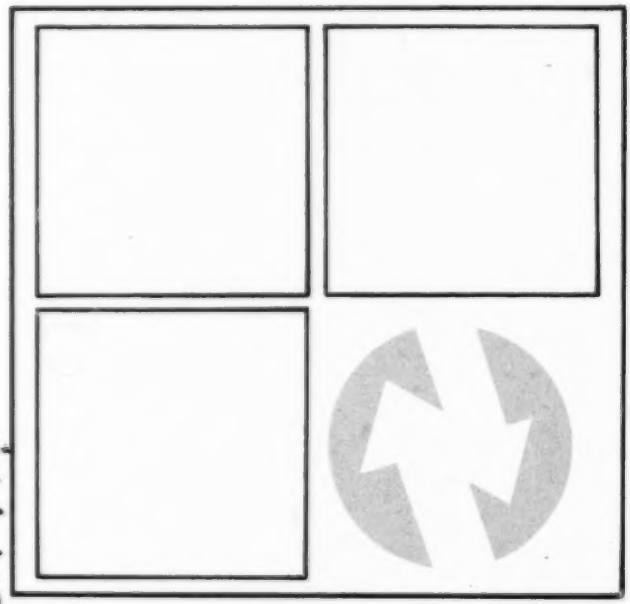

VT 019 479

ERIC Clearinghouse on Vocational and Technical Education

WHAT EVIDENCE IS THERE THAT COOPERATIVE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS NECESSARY OR THAT IT IS BETTER THAN OTHER METHODS OF INSTRUCTION?

The necessity and value of cooperative vocational education programs, as compared to other methods of instruction, has not been proven by research. However, reported experience and several research studies, spanning three-quarters of a century, have revealed that high quality cooperative vocational education programs extend and improve the learning environment for participating students. Cooperative vocational education provides experiences that prepare students for occupational flexibility and mobility. The individual attention given students by teacher-coordinators and employers helps the students build self-identity and confidence as workers. Other methods of instruction cannot provide students with as many opportunities to test personal abilities in work atmospheres. (See IN 21)

HOW DOES COOPERATIVE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION DIFFER FROM OTHER WORK-EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS?

Cooperative vocational education and work-experience programs provide actual job experience while students are in school. Work-experience programs have been focused primarily upon providing wage-earning opportunities and general experiences that are not necessarily related to school instruction or career goals. Conversely, cooperative vocational education programs are planned, organized, and supervised by teacher-coordinators working with school personnel, parents, students, and employers.

Students spend part of the school day as paid employees in productive employment and part of the day attending classes. Employment and classes are blended to coincide with the career interests and abilities of students. Planned on-the-job experience and coordinated in-school instruction are the essential elements that make cooperative vocational education programs different from part-time employment for general work experience. An advisory committee and a training plan for each student are significant features of the cooperative vocational education program. Credits are earned toward high school graduation in many cooperative vocational education programs, whereas other work-experience programs seldom offer graduation credits. (See IN 21 and IN 37)

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD COOPERATIVE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM?

Cooperative vocational education programs appear in a variety of forms with characteristics varying in different occupational fields and in different schools. The effective blending of learning experiences in school with those on-the-job characterize good cooperative vocational education programs. The programs are facilitated by teacher-coordinators who arrange appropriate on-the-job training stations, related class instruction, and skill development courses. An active advisory committee, provisions for counseling and guidance, and program evaluation are necessary. Adequate support from the school administration and the business community undergird good programs. Adequate equipment and facilities, as well as a youth club, help to create an environment for maximum student growth. Good cooperative vocational education programs contribute significantly to the successful training, adjustment, and placement of students in productive employment or further educational endeavors. (See IN 36, IN 37, IN 38, and IN 60)

WHAT IS RELATED INSTRUCTION IN A COOPERATIVE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM?

The term "related instruction" has a special meaning in cooperative vocational education. Briefly defined, it is the instruction given in school classes and laboratories that complements the on-the-job experiences of participating students. Related instruction focuses on specific skills of occupations, occupational adjustment needed for success in employment, or on career development aspects of planning and preparing for a satisfactory career. Related instruction should be planned and developed to meet the specific needs of individual students. (See IN 36 and IN 60)

WHERE CAN INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR COOPERATIVE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION BE OBTAINED?

Instructional materials for the development of occupational skills, occupational adjustment, and career development are announced on a continuing basis in *Abstracts of Instructional Materials in Vocational and Technical Education* (AIM).* Teacher-coordinators may use AIM to identify instructional materials that already have been developed for related instruction on a variety of occupations for which cooperative vocational education programs may be developed. Materials announced in AIM are available in microfiche or may be obtained from the original source. Many State Research Coordination Units (RCU's) maintain microfiche collections and provide loan or reproduction services. In addition, many RCU's have developed extensive collections of instructional materials. State supervisory staffs in vocational education generally supply materials in support of programs. Vocational teacher education departments also develop materials and make these available. Relevant resource materials may also be obtained from training station sponsors and other selected business-industry sources. (See IN 21 and IN 60)

AIM is available by subscription from The Center for Vocational and Technical Education, 1960 Kenny Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS MUST A SUCCESSFUL TEACHER-COORDINATOR POSSESS?

The teacher-coordinator who directs the on-the-job training and related instruction for a group of 20 to 30 students is the key staff member. He must be able to counsel students, place students in training stations, help students adjust to the work environment, consult with parents, improve the learning environment at the training station, correlate instruction with on-the-job training, help students with personal adjustment, advise a youth organization, administer a wide range of activities, and relate with the public. The teacher-coordinator must have the enthusiasm and stamina for the job, have experience in the field, and be qualified to teach. Such a staff member must be a planner, promoter, coordinator, teacher, counselor, and a developing professional. (See IN 36, IN 37, IN 38, and IN 60)

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUITABLE JOB TRAINING STATION?

A good cooperative training station will relate to the student-learner's career objective and its sponsor will show an interest in providing individualized instruction on the job, as well as a variety of learning experiences. The sponsor will cooperate in developing a training plan in conference with the teacher-coordinator. The training station will provide a beneficial physical and moral environment for the student-learner. Compensation and benefits will be appropriate. Marginal training stations can be developed into useful ones, but caution

should be exercised if commitment and conditions are doubtful. (See IN 36 and IN 60)

WHAT ARE SOME PROBLEMS THAT CAN BE ANTICIPATED IN DEVELOPING AND OPERATING A COOPERATIVE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM?

Developers may encounter several problems that can limit successful program operation. The primary difficulties have been shortages of qualified teacher-coordinators and inadequate training stations. Also, a variety of restrictions prevent student participation, such as governmental regulations, labor union procedures, school policies, and parental doubts about the program. Most of these limiting factors can be resolved by involving school personnel, parents, students, employers, and union officials in planning the program. Also, cycles of high and low employment in some occupations have been a problem. (See IN 37)

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION: Answers to Questions on Vocational and Technical Education

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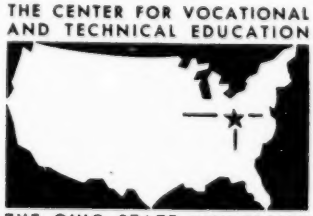

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ORDERING INFORMATION

Answers to questions in this brochure were obtained from the publications listed below. The publications may be obtained from the indicated sources.

Series	Title	Source, Order No., Cost
IN 21	Review and Synthesis of Research on Cooperative Vocational Education	EDRS (ED 040 274) MF $0.65 HC $6.58
IN 36	What Teacher Coordinators Should Know About Cooperative Vocational Education	EDRS (ED 059 348) MF $0.65 HC $3.29 GPO (HE 5.2: V85/8) $0.30
IN 37	What School Administrators Should Know About Cooperative Vocational Education	EDRS (ED 057 180) MF $0.65 HC $3.29 GPO (HE 5.2: V85/7) $0.25
IN 38	What State Leaders Should Know About Cooperative Vocational Education	EDRS (ED 059 349) MF $0.65 HC $3.29 GPO (HE 5.2: V85/6) $0.30
IN 60	Review and Analysis of Instructional Materials for Cooperative Vocational Education	EDRS (ED 062 513) MF $0.65 HC $3.29 CVTE (IN 60) $1.50

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